

The Pathfinder

AEF 1/2

447th Air Expeditionary Group

July 16, 2006

Sather Air Base, Baghdad, Iraq



Airmen, Iraqis control the airport

Page 4

**Captains run
toward
marathon for
charity**
Page 3



**Honor guard
imagery**
Page 5



**SECDEF
stops by,
says hi**
Page 8

Make our airpower count

By Lt. Col. Scott Bowen

447th Expeditionary Operations Support Squadron commander

Folks, I am here to tell you that I am excited about the work we are all doing here. Every Airman on Sather Air Base is about one thing and one thing only: **Airpower**. It is our Nation's Airpower that is, here at Sather, directly contributing to the freedom of the Iraqi people by persistently moving personnel and cargo throughout United States Central Command's Area of Responsibility. Make no mistake: You are the key ingredient of **Airpower**. Accordingly, I ask that during the rest of your time here you continue to make our **Airpower** count.

Each of you makes our **Airpower** count. Since arriving in May I have seen some of the most talented and energetic folks at work, witnessed some very heroic acts, gazed upon young people half my age who are acting like veterans and, honestly, never been more proud than I am at this very moment. No matter what squadron, no matter what shift, no matter what rank or position, no matter what your AFSC is.....each member of this Sather Team is a prime exporter of **Airpower**. Each of you have a job that in one way, shape or form directly contributes to the operation of this air base and to ultimately ensuring that **Airpower** carries the day!

Whether you have just arrived, have been here for four months or are at your own half-



Photo illustration by Staff Sgt. Bryan Bouchard

way point of this deployment, I ask each of you to maximize your export of **Airpower** by doing the following for the rest of the time you are here:

- **Don't get complacent**
- **Continue to run a marathon**
- **Be a good wingman**

Don't get complacent: I think it would be safe to say that we all will go through three main phases during our time together here: excitement, sustainment and completion. The first phase is the initial excitement/shock of being deployed in the middle of Iraq and

"figuring out my place" here at Sather. The second phase I call sustainment because this is the phase where we are "hitting on all cylinders," making the mission happen. The third phase will be the completion phase, or the "I've done my deployment and I'm ready to get home" phase. Each phase has its intricacies, but probably the most dangerous phase is the stage that most of us are in right now, the sustainment phase. I say this because this is the phase where complacency can easily set in. We've got our jobs licked (at least we think we do) and we set ourselves on cruise-control thinking today will be just like yesterday.

Unfortunately, many of our safety/accident reports continue to cite "complacency" as a direct or contributing factor to a mishap. I encourage each of you to take a step back and reevaluate the way you approach your work. It just may save your life or that of someone around you.

Continue to run a marathon: For me, this deployment is all about running a marathon. I have established a pace that will get me to the finish line with the best trade-off between energy and accomplishment. Sure, I'm working more hours than I do at home, but in this environment, because of fewer other demands, I have more time to take care of myself by exercising, eating right, getting plenty of rest and improving myself in any

See **AIRPOWER**, on Page 3

The Pathfinder

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Front Page photo

Air Force controllers in the tower at Baghdad International airport work hand-in-hand with their Iraqi counterparts.

(Photo by Staff Sgt. Bryan Bouchard)



Two Sather officers train for marathon, charity

By Staff Sgt. Bryan Bouchard
Public Affairs

In people's mornings there are many constants: an alarm clock, the sun, coffee. But for Airmen at Sather, there are two morning constants which are a definite sign that morning has arrived. Capts. Melissa Youderian and Sharon Gregory can be seen six days a week running 4-12 miles around tent city, which officially identifies to every Airman that a new day has started.

After being deployed here for months, they have identified a goal of running in this year's Marine Corps Marathon in October in Washington, D.C. to benefit the Fisher House, a charity which benefits families of wounded servicemembers.

"I usually run marathons just because I like to run," said Sheppard Air Force Base's own Capt. Gregory, chief of the base's PERSCO operation here. "But I wanted to do something special for this marathon because it's a military marathon. I wanted to help the Fisher House because of what they do for the families of the injured servicemembers."

According to the Fisher House web site, the program is a unique private-public partnership that supports America's military in their time of need. It recognizes the special sacrifices of men and women in uniform and the hardships of military service by meeting a humanitarian need beyond that normally provided by the Departments of Defense and Veterans Affairs.

There is at least one Fisher House at every major military medical center to assist families in need and to ensure that they are provided with the comforts of home in a supportive environment. Annually, the



Photo by Staff Sgt. Bryan Bouchard

Capt. Sharon Gregory (left) and Melissa Youderian train almost daily by running 4-12 miles here at Sather in preparation for the Marine Corps Marathon in October.

Fisher House program serves more than 8,500 families, and have made available more than two million days of lodging to family members since the program originated in 1990.

"Being able to indirectly support the heroes of the Iraq war is very worthwhile," said Capt. Youderian, the 447th Air Expeditionary Group force protection chief who is deployed from the 1st Fighter Wing at Langley AFB, Va. "It's definitely good motivation for the 26.2 miles we're going to

be running. When we hit the wall training, it's that added incentive to know that we're doing it for a good cause."

Since deploying in March, Captain Youderian has ran more than 400 miles since then. Capt. Gregory arrived in April and has completed more than 200 miles with her running partner.

While each runner pays her own way to the event, each Military Spouse – Fisher House team member must raise \$500 to donate to Fisher House. To reach this goal, both runners are looking for support from their fellow deployed Airmen here at Sather.

The two captains, along with the Sather Company Grade Officer Council will be holding a car wash July 22 from 8 a.m. to noon at the wash rack to raise funds to donate.

To donate in the names of the two captains or for more information about Fisher House, visit www.fisherhouse.org.

DOWN & DIRTY

Who: Sather CGOC

What: Car Wash

When: Sat. 8 a.m. - noon

Where: Base wash rack

Why: Taking charitable contributions to donate to Fisher House, which benefits families of wounded servicemembers.

AIRPOWER, from Page 2

number of ways.....all in an honest, deployed days work. We can't walk here, nor can we sprint, because both of these techniques could contribute to the downfall of either your unit or you personally. Run your marathon and get to the finish line, it is in the best interest of all involved.

Be a good wingman: OK, I admit it, I'm a fighter pilot. The bad thing about this is that I'm the only one here and I receive a lot of (really weak) fighter pilot jokes, particularly from Lt Col (select) Soule. The good thing is

that engrained in my Tennessee-educated brain is the concept of being a good wingman. In the fighter community we ALWAYS fight with at least two jets. This is simply because having two pilots looking out after each other is exponentially better than one looking out for himself. This wingman concept can apply to everything we do here at Sather. Look out for each other, help each other, remind your "wingman" that it is not OK to cut corners, bring someone working outside a bottle of

cold water, lower your wingman's work load a bit when you have a slower day than usual.....just a few examples to make a simple point that being a good wingman is all about taking care of those around you, whether at work, play or somewhere in the middle.

Airpower. Don't get complacent with it, run your marathon in support of it, and be a good wingman to maximize our collective export of it. Live it and love being a part of the greatest Air Force on the face of the globe.



Photos by Staff Sgt. Bryan Bouchard

Staff Sgt. Michael Fuelleman listens in to Staff Sgt. Richard Henry as he speaks with one of his Iraqi air traffic control counterparts in the tower of Baghdad International Airport. Sgt. Fuelleman is deployed from Offutt Air Force Base, Neb., while SSgt. Henry is from Holloman AFB, N.M.

Controllers work side-by-side with Iraqis, friends



By Staff Sgt. Bryan Bouchard
Public Affairs

They may be from two differing cultures, but through their common occupations, Air Force and local Iraqi air traffic controllers have realized that their similarities will eventually lead to accomplishing their goals.

"There's a lot of bustling and coordination between us and them," said Staff Sgt. Richard Henry, air traffic control watch supervisor and a member of the 447th Air Expeditionary Group at Sather Air Base. "You can't even tell there are two different cultures working together up here – we're all the same."

While Sergeant Henry said the job of the controllers is the safe movement of air travel in and out of Baghdad's airport, they are always working toward the long-term goal of complete Iraqi control.

"(The Air Force) is a small piece of Baghdad Airport," he said. "We have a ramp and help run the airport. These positions are eventually going to be phased out and the Iraqis will control the whole thing. We try to keep that message alive with them, we tell them 'this is your airport, how do you want to do this or that,' and we're open to how they want to do things because our goal is to eventually leave here."

Achieving that goal is seen as a win-win situation for all involved. Once the Coalition reaches that point however, some may have mixed feelings.

Hazim Karim Abud has been controlling air traffic at Baghdad International since 1989. While he admitted that times are tough in Baghdad, he was quick to point out that he has made some special connections with his American counterparts since the Air Force assumed its position in the tower last couple years.

"It's not just a matter of the job of airfield control," he said. "It's

Sather firefighters respond to blaze

By Staff Sgt. Bryan Bouchard
Public Affairs

Sixteen Sather Air Base firefighters responded to, controlled and eventually extinguished a large grass fire which threatened several locations on the Victory Base Complex outside Baghdad, July 3.

"A trash burn got out of control and started the surrounding grassy area on fire," said Tech. Sgt. Michael Routh, assistant operations chief. The fire was not technically on Sather Air Base-proper he added, but was within the confines of the Victory Base Complex, on which Sather sits.

The fire chief, Chief Master Sgt. Robert Guerrero, was driving to Fire Station 1 when he noticed the blaze and called it in.

"My first reaction was (to wonder) if this was going to affect flying operations," Sergeant Routh said. "My second concern was whether any structures would be involved and whether those buildings were occupied or not."

The fire department responded with six trucks and 16 firefighters, who were joined by firefighters from neighboring Camps Stryker and Victory, and water trucks from contractor KBR. Together, the teams gained control over the blaze in 30 minutes.

"The wind was blowing the fire straight toward the neighborhood and our crews along with the Stryker and Victory crews were able to stop it," he said.

Sergeant Routh said that several spot fires were too far inside the area that trucks could not get access.



Photo by Chief Master Sgt. Robert Guerrero

"We had to let it burn out toward the roads before full extinguishment, which took about seven hours."

While there was no property loss, within a fenced area in the middle of the fields at least 2 pieces of unexploded ordnance ignited from exposure to fire.

"We made sure no crews entered this area, so we had to wait for the fire to burn through the fenced area before attacking it," Sergeant Routh said.

Sergeant Routh was once a firefighter instructor at the Louis F. Garland Firefighting Academy at Goodfellow Air Force Base, Texas.

He said that while the training at Goodfellow AFB is top-notch, nothing can substitute real firefighting experience that one gets through time on the job.

"Basic firefighter training is only the beginning," he said.

TOWER, from Page 4

more a matter of human relations. We have made many friends here."

The road to these friendships and cooperation has been a page straight from a cross-cultural communications course: understanding and acceptance of others.

"(The Iraqi controllers) are so nice and so willing to learn our language, so we applied a little bit of time trying to learn their customs and a little of their language," Sergeant Henry said. "They pick up

on (that effort) right away and welcome you."

The sergeant added that when it comes down to it, the Iraqis are no different than himself or the rest of his team.

"I don't think you realize that when we're sitting in the U.S., how exactly the same the Iraqis are to us," he said. "These guys are married and have kids and deal with much of the same stuff we deal with back home."

This is Sergeant Henry's second tour in Iraq, having served four

months at what is now known as Ali Base in the south of the country. He said he came into this deployment thinking it would be similar, but was pleasantly surprised at the differences.

"I was thinking it was going to be like Tallil, but getting to work with the Iraqis and getting to know the culture here has made this more than just a deployment to a foreign country living in a tent city," he said. "We actually get to be part of the culture here."

Hazim added that he remembers all of the Air Force controllers like Sergeant Henry whom he's worked with in the past and remains in contact with some of them through e-mails.

"We hope that there is always a good relationship between us as friends," Hazim said. "When someone I care about and respect leaves, I feel sad. Someday, everyone will leave but I hope we meet again as friends — of course without the uniforms."



Photos by Staff Sgt. Bryan Bouchard

Staff Sgt. Melinda Horak displays the flag before she and her team folded it after it flew behind the Glass House.



Staff Sgt. Jimmy Ramos (left), Senior Airman Peyton John and Senior Airman Angela Galban prepare to fly a flag.

Honor Guard flies more than 200 flags on July Fourth



After starting at 0000 hours July Fourth, honor guard members flew flags throughout the day until late into the night.

Sather Warrior of the Week



Photos by Staff Sgt. Bryan Bouchard

Airman Upshaw shakes hands with the Secretary of Defense last week.

SATHER AIR BASE BRIEFS

Mail gets X-rayed

All mail leaving Iraq gets x-rayed at the Bahrain International Airport. Customs in these particular countries are searching for items such as weapons, live or spent ammunition and UXOs. Knives with a blade that opens automatically by hand pressure or by operations of inertia, gravity, or both, or with a detachable blade propelled by a spring-operated mechanism are non-mailable. For further information regarding what cannot be mailed through your military postal system, contact the Sather AB Postmaster at 446-2036 or e-mail your question to 447ecs.postal@bdab.centaf.af.mil.

Passenger safety

People riding in vehicles must wear seat belts at all times. The safety office is conducting seat belt checks soon to measure base compliance with this directive. The first violation is a suspension of base driving privileges and an office call with the group commander.

Life Skills deployment tip

Sleep Problems

Insomnia is a widespread problem affecting essentially everyone at one period in their lifetime. It is perhaps the most frequent health complaint after pain. For many individuals, sleep is particularly difficult during deployment!

Tips for Improving Sleep:

- Avoid Caffeine for 6-8 Hours Before Bedtime.
- Nicotine: Avoid Nicotine Before Bedtime.
- Sleeping Medications are only Short-Term Solutions: Sleep medications lose their effectiveness in about 2-4 weeks when taken regularly.
- Exercise: Get regular exercise, preferably 30-60 minutes per day.
- Sleeping Environment: Moderate Temperature, Quiet, and Dark: Modify your environment as much as possible to improve sleep.
- Eating: A light bedtime snack (e.g., cereal, cheese) can promote sleep. Avoid caffeinated and high-fat foods at bedtime.

· Avoid Naps: The sleep you obtain during the day takes away from sleep at night. If you must nap, keep it to 15-30 minutes.

· Allow Yourself At Least An Hour at Bedtime to Unwind: The brain is not a light switch that you can instantly cut on and off. Find relaxing bedtime routine.

· Set a Reasonable Arising Time and Stick to It: Set the alarm and get out of bed at the same time each morning, including on days off.

· Go to Bed Only When You are Sleepy: When you go to bed too early, it only gives your more time to be frustrated. Individuals often ponder the events of the day, plan the next day's schedule, or worry about being unable to sleep.

· Get Out of Bed When You Can't Fall Asleep or Go Back to Sleep in About 15 Minutes. Return to Bed Only When You are Sleepy.

For more information on how to better deal with these issues, call Capt. Mitzi Mitchell at 446-2602.



Photos by Staff Sgt. Bryan Bouchard

Staff Sgt. Dan Johnson marshals in a Blackhawk carrying the Secretary of Defense July 12. Sergeant Johnson is deployed from Dover AFB, Del.

Secretary Rumsfeld stops through Sather



Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld shakes hands with Lt. Col. Scott Bowen, 447th Expeditionary Operations Support Squadron commander, as he passed through the base July 12. Next to the secretary is Col. Ron Rutland, 447th Air Expeditionary Group commander.



A Charleston Air Force Base C-17 Globemaster awaits the Secretary of Defense as he passes overhead in a UH-60 Blackhawk July 12.

Around Sather




Gang cutline (clockwise, from top left): Senior Airman Jeff McCain from New Al Muthana performs a post-flight check on an Iraqi C-130. Capt. Shamekia Toliver staves off the advances of a Tops in Blue performer. Players from the undefeated security forces team rally up during the opening night of intramural basketball. Senior Airman Theodore Disho picks up a pallet from the back of a C-130 July 10.



July ... for now

(all events/times subject to change)

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1 Team Sather July Fourth Celebration
2 Victory Peachtree 10K Bingo - 0900/2100	3 Horseshoes - 2030 Open Mic Night 2130	4 Spin Class 1900 Abs Class 2100 Jessica Sierra @ Victory 2000	5 Step Class - 2030 CONCERT "Hollowell" 2000	6 Abs Class 1900	7	8 Abs Class 2000 Salsa night 2030
9	10 Fight Night Round 2 1900 Karaoke 2200	11 Spin Class 1900 Abs Class 2000	12 Step 2030 TOPS in BLUE 1930	13 Abs Class 1900	14	15 Abs Class 1900 4ID Rock Band Karaoke 2030
16	17 Halo 2 tourn. 1900 Karaoke 2200	18 Spin Class 1900 Abs Class 2000	19 Step 2030 Karaoke 2200	20 Abs Class 1900	21	22 Abs Class 2000 Salsa Night 2030
23	24 Karaoke 2200 Project Gotham Racing tourn. 1900	25 Spin Class 1900 Abs Class 2000	26 Step 2030 Open Mic 2200	27 Abs Class 1900	28	29 Abs Class 2000 Karaoke 2030
30	31 Unreal Champion 2 tourn. 1900					

Other activities

Tobacco Cessation Class

Thursday's 1800-1930
 6 sessions beginning
 July 20.



Army vs. Air Force soccer match
 Airmen and soldiers interested in playing,
 contact Staff Sgt. Melinda Horak at 446-2802.

Sather Air Base Chapel

Worship Services

Saturday: 1700 - Catholic Confession
 1730 - Catholic Mass
 Sunday: 0800 - Traditional Protestant
 0900 - Gospel
 1000 - Gospel Service
 1130 - Church of Christ
 1400 - LDS Service
 1800 - Contemporary
 1930 - Contemporary Protestant
 Thursday: 1830 - Contemporary
 Friday: 1800 - Gospel

Bible Studies

Monday: 1830 - Ladies Bible Study
 Tuesday: 2030 - Beginners' Bible Study
 (Pentecostal Perspective)
 Wednesday: 1930 - Church of Christ Bible Study
 1930 - Process of Redemption
 Friday: 2000 - Book Club
 2000 - A New Study!

All Studies are located at the Chapel offices.
 For more information call Sather Chapel 446-2452.

Intramural basketball standings

1. ECES # 1	3	0
2. ESFS	2	0
3. ESCORTS	2	0
4. ECES # 2	1	0
5. F.D. # 1	1	1
6. ECS	1	1
7. ELRS # 1	1	1
8. ELRS # 2	1	1
9. NAMAB	0	1
10. EOSS	0	2
11. F.D. # 2	0	2
12. EMEDS	0	3